

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 101383 TOSEC 040172

NODIS
CHEROKEE, FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHRISTOPHER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS), PFOR

SUBJECT: CAMP DAVID CABINET MEETING

1. ON YOUR RETURN, I WILL BRIEF YOU IN MORE DETAIL ON MONDAY'S CABINET MEETING AT CAMP DAVID BUT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE EVENT. THE MEMBERS OF THE CABINET AND SENIOR STAFF ASSEMBLED AT CAMP DAVID SUNDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 16. FOR THE CABINET, THE AFTERNOON AND EVENING WERE DEVOTED TO RELAXED, INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS. FOR THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF, THERE WAS A MEETING FROM 4:30 TO 6:15. CHARLIE DUNCAN AND I STOOD IN FOR HAROLD BROWN AND YOU. ALL OF THE OTHER CABINET MEMBERS AND SENIOR STAFF WERE PRESENT.

2. THE CABINET MEETING CONVENED MONDAY MORNING AT 8:45. I HAD TO LEAVE AFTER AN HOUR TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON AT SENATOR BYRD'S REQUEST TO MEET WITH SENATORS WHO WERE
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WAIVERING ON THE SECOND PANAMA CANAL TREATY VOTE. THE PORTION OF THE MEETING THAT I ATTENDED WAS LARGELY TAKEN UP BY A SUCCINCT PRESENTATION BY THE PRESIDENT. IN IT HE TOOK UP THE FOLLOWING THEMES:

-- HE ALLUDED TO SOME OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S SUCCESSES TO DATE, MENTIONING THE FIGHT AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT, THE

INITIATIVES ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND NON-PROLIFERATION, AND THE ANTICIPATED SUCCESS IN SECURING ACCEPTANCE OF THE CANAL TREATIES.

-- HE CITED SETBACKS ON THE HILL, AND ENUMERATED ISSUES ON WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION FACED AN UPHILL BATTLE, SUCH AS SALT AND URBAN POLICY. HE OBSERVED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAD SUBMITTED A NUMBER OF COMPREHENSIVE POLICY PROGRAMS (E.G., WELFARE AND ENERGY) FOR WHICH IT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT TO BUILD NATIONAL SUPPORT. HE NOTED THAT THE HEALTH INSURANCE ISSUE WOULD BE THE LAST COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE HE INTENDED TO PRESENT TO THE HILL.

-- IN THE FUTURE, THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD CONSOLIDATE ITS PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS. ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WE SHOULD EMPHASIZE OUR EFFORTS FOR PEACE, COMMITMENT TO A STRONG DEFENSE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS. ON THE DOMESTIC SIDE, THE FIGHT AGAINST INFLATION WILL BE A UNIFYING THEME AND CIVIL SERVICE REFORM WILL SYMBOLIZE THE EFFORT TO MAKE GOVERNMENT MORE RESPONSIVE.

-- HE ENUMERATED A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE WHITE HOUSE THAT HE THOUGHT CABINET MEMBERS COULD ADVANCE WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION.

-- FINALLY, HE CATALOGUED THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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CABINET DEPARTMENTS, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY. MORE LATER ON THIS POINT.

3. THE PRESIDENT'S PRESENTATION WAS FORCEFUL AND STIMULATING. FOREIGN POLICY GENERALLY FAIRED WELL.

CHRISTOPHER

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